

months respectively. The average number of days to consider nominees used to be between 50 and 90, it rose last year to over 200 and this year stands at over 300 days from nomination to confirmation. That is too long and does a disservice to our Federal Courts. I urge the Republican leadership to proceed to consideration of each of the judicial nominees pending on the Senate calendar without further delay.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The Senate will now return to legislative session.

Mr. BYRD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

CORRECTIONS TO THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, on yesterday, I addressed the Senate concerning Senator MOYNIHAN's birthday. On page S1967, the first column, the last full paragraph on that page, the word "stoop" should be "swoop" in Herman Melville's eloquent quotation.

In the RECORD, during my remarks concerning WENDELL FORD being the longest serving Kentuckian in the history of the Senate, on page S1969, the first column, the last full paragraph, the word "countries" should be "counties."

I ask unanimous consent that these two items be corrected in the permanent version of the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each until 4 p.m. today, when we will go to the opening discussion on the NATO enlargement issue.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CAMPBELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I yield to my colleague from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to follow Senator CAMPBELL in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, I ask that I be able to follow the Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask to permission to follow the Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. CAMPBELL. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. CAMPBELL and Mr. ALLARD pertaining to the introduction of S. 1771 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

MARRIAGE PENALTY TAX RELIEF

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to say that we have taken, or are in the process of taking, one major step toward more tax relief for the hard-working American family. The budget resolution, which is being marked up as we speak right now, will allow for \$30 billion in tax relief for the hard-working Americans.

This \$30 billion is not nearly enough. I hope that we will be able to expand the \$30 billion. But, at least it recognizes that we need to keep on the same course that we started last year, and that is giving back to the American people more of the money they earn so they can decide how they want to spend it, rather than sending it to Washington and letting somebody here decide what is best for their families. That is what we are trying to do in this Congress. We are trying to give more of the money that people earn back to them. And \$30 billion will not do it, but at least that is a beginning. It is a beginning for new tax cuts that we would propose over the next 5 years.

I am very pleased to say that both Congressman ARCHER, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, and Senator ROTH, the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, both of whom will be responsible for setting the priorities in tax cuts, have said their first priority is the marriage penalty tax. I am very pleased that Senator FAIRCLOTH and I are working on a bill that will provide that relief. There is a Faircloth-Hutchison bill that allows people to put their money together and split it in half. There is a Hutchison-Faircloth bill that will allow people to file as single or married, whichever is best for them. We want the hard-working young couple that gets married not to have to pay a penalty.

Let me just give you an example that is a true one. A rookie policeman in the city of Houston, TX, makes around \$30,000 a year. He marries a Pasadena School District schoolteacher who makes about \$28,000 a year. When they get married, they will owe almost \$1,000 in additional taxes. Mr. President, we think that is wrong. We do not think that Americans should have to choose between love and money. We do not think that young couples who are getting married, who want to have their first home, who want to buy that new car, should have to give more money to Uncle Sam because they decided to get married and start their family. That is not the American dream. So we are going to try to do something about it.

I want to commend Senator FAIRCLOTH from North Carolina, because he

took the early lead on this. He and I have been working together to eliminate the marriage penalty tax once and for all. I am very pleased that Senator ROTH and BILL ARCHER, from Texas, who understands this issue—have said this is a first priority. If we can give this relief to that young couple that gets married, they will be able to perhaps put that money aside for a downpayment on their first home, or perhaps a downpayment on a new car. Rather than sending that money to Washington for the government to decide how they should spend it, we need to let couples keep that money they earn, which in many cases could equal a couple of car payments.

So, \$30 billion is not quite enough. The Joint Tax Committee says that it would be roughly \$110 billion over 5 years that would be taken out of the Government coffers to repeal the marriage penalty. We are going to have to keep working to look for either a budget surplus or more money that could be set aside, or we may have to phase that in. But the bottom line is this is one step toward the right thing to do. It is one step more in the direction of giving more tax relief to that young couple that decides to get married, who are in entry-level positions, just starting their lives together, and we are going to make that happen. If we have to do it by phasing it in, we will do it; if we have to do it by finding more money, we will do it, because we believe it is the right thing to do.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor to the Senator from North Carolina, who is a cosponsor with me of both of the bills that would give tax relief to that young couple who should not have to choose between love and money.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. FAIRCLOTH. Mr. President, thank you. I thank Senator HUTCHISON.

Mr. President, I want to join the Senator from Texas in thanking the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator DOMENICI, for including a repeal of the marriage penalty tax in the budget resolution which was unveiled today.

Mr. President, Senator HUTCHISON, Senator CONNIE MACK, and I have sponsored legislation to remove this unfair tax. It penalizes couples simply because they get married. Because of the hard work of Chairman DOMENICI and the Budget Committee, we are making progress in getting rid of this tax. The majority leader, Senator LOTT, has also been tremendously supportive. Senator HUTCHISON, Senator LOTT, and I recently pledged on Valentine's Day that we would work to have this tax burden removed by Valentine's Day next year. I think it is a reasonable goal and a step closer with today's budget resolution. What better use of money could we have, what better use than to give tax relief to a young couple getting married? The Congressional Budget Office has determined that 21 million married couples pay an average